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women met violent deaths as a result of marriage disputes in 39 hsien (out of a total of 86) in Hunan.[23]

674 It seems reasonable to assume that the figures are incomplete and the categories not comparable because the Communists had no more accurate material to offer. If the incidence of violence in connection with marital and family disputes is truly reflected in these figures, their extension into yearly rates shows these deaths occurred at the rate of less than two per hundred-thousand population in the Northwest Region, less than four per hundred-thousand in the East China Region, and less than nine per hundred-thousand in Hunan. It should be remembered, however, that these ratios are based on incomplete figures and that the incidence of violence may have resulted as much from Communist pressures as from the authoritarian character of the traditional family.

• 586 Divorce and marriage figures released by the Communists are equally difficult to render meaningful because of gaps in statistics and the different time spans and categories which are given for the figures cited. For the nation as a whole, the number of divorces was reported to have risen from 186,000 in 1950 (the last seven months of it under the new

23. C.B., 236, p. 5.

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• 586 Marriage Law), to 409,500 in 1951, and to 398,000 in the first half of 1952.[24] The latter figure is only slightly higher than the number of divorces for all of 1952 in the United States, the population of which is about one-quarter of that of China.[25] So far as is known, no separate figure for the number of divorces in the East China Region has been made public, although for the Central-South Region 32,881 cases involving marriage disputes were reported handled by the courts in the first five months of 1952.[26] The most significant statistics in the East China Region appear to be those for Shanghai alone during the first full year under the new Marriage Law (May 1, 1950 to April 30, 1951) when 13,349 cases of marital disputes were heard by the courts of the metropolis. More than 10,000 of these cases were stated to have been initiated by women, and more than 30,000 persons were said to have been liberated through disposition in all cases.[27] Evidently many of the disputes involved multiple wives or concubines.

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24. Ibid., 243, p. 3.

25. Divorces in the United States during 1952 totaled 392,000. See The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1955, Harry Hansen, ed., New York, New York World Telegram and The Sun, 1955, p. 312.

26. S.C.M.P., 171, p. 16.

27. Ibid., 132, p. 20.

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Reports on the results of the 1952 investigations of Marriage Law implementation were framed in equally incomparable area and time categories. One report covering northern Kiangsu during the first half of 1952 noted that the number of arranged engagements during the period totaled 39,911 or nearly three times the number of engagements "founded on free love," while 19,894 arranged marriages had taken place, exceeding the number of free marriages by 28 per cent.[28] Another report at about the same time gave a more complete picture for the whole province of Kiangsi from May 1950 to January 1952. In the province during that time, it was reported 121,000 free marriages had been arranged with the assistance of the All-China Federation of Democratic Women, more than 72,900 divorces had been instituted after the failure of reconciliation attempts, the marriages of 16,454 child brides had been annuled, 40,902 engagements arranged by parents had been terminated, and 33,634 couples had been aided in establishing harmonious homes by the intercession of the People's Government.[29]

D. Reorientation of Family Reform

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Between the time of the publication of these

28. C.B., 236, p. 14.
29. Ibid., p. 4.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF15 East China
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divorce figures in March 1952 and the end of the year, the Communist approach to marriage and family reform seems to have undergone a change. There are indications that the regime's emphasis on new freedom for women and the prominent publicity given statistics on divorce had led to the Marriage Law being popularly termed the "Divorce Law."[30] At the same time, resistance in the rural areas to sudden changes in the old institutions of marriage and family relations were becoming evident to Party leaders as the result of the late 1952 investigations were tabulated.

A shift in the pace and in the propaganda emphasis on marriage and family reform was evident in Liu Ching-fan's report to the Government Administrative Council at the end of 1953. Although the better treatment and greater freedom given to woman was not to be neglected, greater emphasis was placed on the establishment of "harmonious" and "democratic" relationships within the family, whether originally of the old or new type, and to the positive benefits that would accrue to all members of the family as a consequence of reform.[31]

Analyzing the then current situation, Liu noted that the people still maintained a feudal ideology and consciousness in regard to many

30. China News Analysis, 5, p. 2.
31. C.B., 273, pp. 5-6.